

JEWELRY APPARATUS

CROSS REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS: U.S. Provisional Application for Patent 60/427,386, filed 11/18/2002, with title "Jewelry Apparatus" which is hereby incorporated by reference. Applicant claims priority pursuant to 35 U.S.C. Par. 119(e)(I).

Statement as to rights to inventions made under Federally sponsored research and development: Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention.

The present invention relates generally to ornamental body piercing jewelry, and more particularly to body piercing jewelry having removable ornamental accessory that is releasably attachable to a standard barbell stud that is inserted through the bore of a body part piercing.

2. Brief Description of Prior Art.

It is popular for jewelry to have interchangeable, and usually different color ornamental accessories that may be inserted or affixed to the jewelry. In this regard, the wearer is able to remove one element from the piece of jewelry and replace it with a different ornamental piece thereby altering its overall appearance.

It is common practice in the earring field for example, to have interchangeable ornamental pieces. However, such interchangeable pieces generally require the screwing on and off of an end piece to allow for removal of the existing earring for replacement of the ornamental element; and then, re-inserting the earring in the

piercing. While temporary removal of the jewelry from the ear piercing may be an acceptable means for accessing the jewelry for replacing its ornamental element, the inventor has found such procedure not acceptable for all areas of body piercing. For example, skin in a naval area differs from an earlobe. A hole pierced in the skin of the naval area closes rapidly when an installed body piercing jewelry item is removed. As a result of the skin closing, or even partial closing, it becomes painful to re-insert the jewelry item. This is the case even after the brief amount of time required for a hot shower.

To the inventor's knowledge, the prior art does not disclose a jewelry item designed for the pierced naval that allows the wearer to interchange ornamental elements of the jewelry without first removing the entire jewelry item from the body. As a result, the wearer of body piercing jewelry worn in the naval is generally required to either wear the same jewelry thereby avoiding the risks associated with removing the jewelry or, when changing or interchanging the jewelry, risk that the skin in the naval area closes or partially closes between changes. Not being free to change or replace the ornamental appearance of the jewelry item would seem to defeat reasons for even wearing naval jewelry.

A prior art search uncovered the following prior art:

U.S. Patent No. 3,533,247	Oct. 13, 1970	Douglas
U.S. Patent No. 4,682,477	Jul. 28, 1997	Wallencourt
U.S. Patent No. 5,161,390	Nov. 10, 1992	Sam
U.S. Patent No. 5,048,310	Sep. 17, 1991	Riley
U.S. Patent No. 5,438,850	Aug. 08, 1995	Keating et al.
U.S. Patent No. 5,505,061	Apr. 09, 1996	Fleury et al.
U.S. Patent No. 5,524,457	Jun. 11, 1996	Dunham
U.S. Patent No. 5,836,176	Nov. 17, 1998	Lichtenstein et al.
U.S. Patent No. 6,032,486	May 07, 2000	Uchin

However, none of the above referenced registrations apply to naval jewelry or disclose the embodiments of the present invention.

Despite the need for a better naval jewelry accessory that allows the wearer to interchange ornamental elements of the jewelry item without being required to remove the jewelry item from the piercing, there has been virtually no development of alternatives to the above-described structure. There remains a need for a naval jewelry accessory that may be releasably attached to a standard stud that is inserted through the bore of a naval piercing. There is a further need for such a jewelry accessory that is simple to install without requiring the wearer to first remove the jewelry item from the piercing.

As will be seen from the subsequent description, the preferred embodiments of the present invention overcome the above problems and difficulties of the prior art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to ornamental body piercing jewelry that can be releasably attached to a standard barbell stud that is inserted through the bore of a naval piercing. The jewelry accessory of the present invention is simple for the wearer to install without having to first remove the body jewelry stud from the piercing. The jewelry apparatus generally includes a loop portion and a stop member, the loop portion formed of a first arm and a second arm attached to the stop member, wherein separating the second arm from the stop member forms an opening so that the post of the barbell stud can pass through the opening and into the loop portion. Re-attaching the second arm to the stop member will retain the post within the loop portion. A decorative pendant is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus so that the decorative pendant depends from the jewelry apparatus.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a standard barbell stud commonly used in association with body piercing.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the barbell stud of Fig. 1 inserted through the bore of a naval piercing.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the jewelry apparatus of the present invention.

Fig. 3A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 3 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a first alternate installation.

Fig. 4A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 4 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a second alternate installation.

Fig. 5A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 5 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a third alternate installation.

Fig. 6A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 6 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a fourth alternate installation.

Fig. 7A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 7 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a fifth alternate installation.

Fig. 8A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 8 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention including a sixth alternate installation.

Fig. 9A is a perspective view of the jewelry apparatus of Fig. 9 attached to the standard barbell stud.

Fig. 10 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention with an ornamental element attached.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In accordance with the present invention, a jewelry accessory that is attached to body jewelry, such as, but not restricted to, naval body jewelry, is disclosed. The jewelry accessory is directed to ornamental jewelry that is releasably attachable to a standard barbell stud that is inserted through the bore of a body part piercing. Specifically, it will be noted in the drawings that the ornamental body piercing jewelry relates to an ornamental jewelry accessory that can be attached to the barbell stud without removing the stud from the piercing. Further, the jewelry accessory is simple to install by the wearer without assistance. By providing a jewelry apparatus for attaching or detaching to a standard barbell stud or post, there is a savings to the wearer since only the ornamental elements are changed rather than the whole body jewelry.

There are a number of alternate embodiments to carry out the above described invention, which alternates are shown in Figs. 3 - 9, and will be described below. Fig. 10 illustrates application of an embodiment for attachment to the barbell stud, wherein the embodiment having an ornamental element depending therefrom. In the broadest context, the jewelry apparatus of the present invention consists of components configured and correlated with respect to each other so as to attain the desired objective.

Fig. 1 illustrates a standard barbell stud 10 commonly used in association with body piercing. The barbell stud 10 can be described as including a post 12, a first ball

retainer 13 can be removably attached to the upper end of the barbell stud 10, and a second ball retainer 14 can be removably attached to the lower end of the barbell stud 10. Referring to Fig. 2, application of the barbell stud 10 generally requires removal of either the first or second ball retainer 13, 14, inserting the post 12 of the barbell stud 12 through the bore 15 of a body naval area 19, and re-installing the removed retainer 13 and/or 14.

The apparatus of this invention can be described as a jewelry accessory that is releasably attached to the barbell stud 10, and removed therefrom, without removal of the barbell stud 10 from the bore 15 of the naval 19. A decorative element 22, an example of which is shown in Fig. 10, preferably depends from the jewelry accessory of the present invention. The decorative element 22 can be replaced by detaching the jewelry accessory of the present invention from the barbell stud 10 without removal of the stud 10 from the piercing 15, and since the barbell stud 10 remains mounted in the naval 19, attaching a jewelry accessory having the selected decorative elements as discussed above.

Fig. 3 illustrates a preferred embodiment of the jewelry apparatus 100 made in accordance of the present invention. The jewelry apparatus 100 includes an elongated extension member 108, and a loop portion 112, and a stop member means 110. The loop portion 112 having a diamond shape, and formed of a first arm portion 114 and a second arm portion 115 having distal ends 114A and 115A respectively. The stop member means 110 comprising a first retainer member 117 attached to the end 114A, and a second retainer member 118 attached to the end 115A forming a recess 116.

Fig. 3A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 100 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 112, and rests on the retainer members 117, 118 of the stop member means 110. As is understood, the first and second retainer members 117, 118 prevent the post 12 from passing through the recess 116, between the ends 114A and 115A of the jewelry apparatus 100. As shown

in Fig. 3A, in application, the arm portions 114, 115 of the loop portion 112 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (not shown), the loop portion 112 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the naval area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 100 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer simply separates the ends 114A, 115A so that the post 12 of the stud 10 passes through the recess 116, between the retainer members 117, 118. Separation can be performed by the wearer holding the first arm portion 114 and the second arm portion 115 and pulling the arm portions similar to a wishbone, until the ends 114A, 115A have sufficiently separated. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 100 is similarly accomplished by separating the ends 114A, 115A as discussed above until the post 12 passes through the recess 116.

The jewelry apparatus 100 is preferably constructed of a semi-rigid material capable of separating as described above, and able to return to original form once the separation step is complete.

Not shown in Figs. 3 or 3A, a decorative element 22 is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus 100 so that the decorative element 22 depends from the jewelry apparatus 100. The decorative element 22 may attach to the extension member 108, or the diamond-shaped loop portion 112 by means known in the art.

Fig. 4 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry apparatus 200. The jewelry apparatus 200 includes an elongated stop member means 210 disposed between a loop portion 212 having a hanger portion 212A, and a base portion 213. As shown in the drawings, the apparatus 200 is formed of a first arm portion 214 and a second arm portion 215. The arm portions 214, 215 are in butting relationship to one another to form the stop member means 210, while the arm portions 214, 215 are separate from one another to form the base portion 213. The arm portions 214, 215 further include distal ends 214A and 215A respectively, forming a recess 216 therebetween.

Fig. 4A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 200 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 212, and rests on the hanger portion 212A of the loop portion 212. The stop means 210 prevents the post 12 from passing between the ends 214A and 215A of the jewelry apparatus 200. As shown in Fig. 4A, in application, the arm portions 214, 215 forming loop portion 212 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (not shown), the loop portion 212 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the naval area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 200 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer simply separates the ends 214A, 215A so that the post 12 of the stud 10 passes through the recess 216 disposed between the ends 214A, 215A, and further passes between the arm portions 214, 215 of the stop means 210, and into the loop portion 212.

Separation can be accomplished by the wearer holding the first arm portion 214 and the second arm portion 215 at the base portion 213 and pulling the arms similar to a wishbone, until the ends 214A, 215A have sufficiently separated, as well as the arm portions 214, 215 of the stop means 210 are sufficiently separate. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 200 is similarly accomplished by separating the ends 214A, 215A as discussed above until the post 12 passes between the arm portions 214, 215 of the stop means 210 and through the recess 216.

Not shown in Figs. 4 or 4A, a decorative element 22 is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus 200 so that the decorative element 22 depends from the jewelry apparatus 200. The decorative element 22 may attach to the elongated stop means 210, the loop portion 212, or the base portion 213 by means known in the art.

Fig. 5 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry apparatus 300. The jewelry apparatus 300 includes a hinged stop 310 connected to a loop portion 312. Hinged stop 310 is pivotable about hinge 307 from an open position (not shown) to a closed position as shown in Figs. 5 and 5A. The loop portion 312 formed of first and second arm portions 314, 315 forming a recess 316.

Fig. 5A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 300 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 312, and rests on the stop 310 in the closed position. As shown in Fig. 4A, in application, the arm portions 314, 315 of the loop portion 312 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (not shown), the loop portion 312 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the nasal area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 300 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer partly pivots the stop 310 to the open position (not shown) to access the recess 316 so that the post 12 of the stud 10 can pass through the recess 316 into the loop portion 312. Once the post 12 is disposed within the loop portion 312, the post 12 is retained therein by pivoting the stop 310 to the closed position as shown in the drawings. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 300 is similarly performed by pivoting the stop 310 to the open position and removing the post 12 from the loop portion 312 of the jewelry apparatus 300.

Not shown in Figs. 5 or 5A, a decorative element 22 is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus 300 so that the decorative element 22 depends from the jewelry apparatus 300. The decorative element 22 can attach to the loop portion 312 by means known in the art.

Fig. 6 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry apparatus 400. The jewelry apparatus 400 includes a hinged stop 410 connected to a loop portion 412, the loop portion 412 having a handle portion 413 formed thereon. Hinged stop 410 is pivotable about hinge 407 from an open position (not shown) to a closed position as shown in Figs. 6 and 6A.

Fig. 6A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 400 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 412, and rests on the loop portion 412 in the closed position. As shown in Fig. 6A, in application, the loop portion

412 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (not shown), the loop portion 412 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the nasal area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 400 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer partly pivots the stop 410 to the open position (not shown) that opens a small slot (not shown) so that the post 12 of the stud 10 can pass through the small slot and into loop portion 412. Once the post 12 is disposed within the loop portion 412, the post 12 is retained therein by pivoting the stop 410 to the closed position as shown in the drawings. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 400 is similarly performed by pivoting the stop 410 to the open position and removing the post 12 from the loop portion 412 of the jewelry apparatus 400. Placement of the hinged arm 405 to the open or closed positions as described above can be performed by the wearer holding the handle portion 413 and then selectively pivoting the stop 410.

Not shown in Figs. 6 or 6A, a decorative element 22 is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus 400 so that the decorative element 22 depends from the jewelry apparatus 400. The decorative element 22 can attach to the loop portion 412 by means known in the art.

Fig. 7 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry apparatus 500. The jewelry apparatus 500 includes a loop portion 512 having a hanger portion 512A and a stop member 510. The loop portion 512 formed of a first arm portion 514 and a second arm portion 515. The first arm portion 514 is rotatably affixed to a surface 513 of the stop 510 and, the second arm portion 515 includes a threaded portion (not shown) that is threadably received in a threaded bore (not shown) disposed in the surface 513 of the stop 510. Loop portion 512 is rotatably positioned about first arm 514 from an open position (not shown) where second arm 515 is not received within the surface 513 of the stop 510, to a closed position as shown in Figs. 7 and 7A where the threaded portion of the second arm 515 is threadably received within threaded bore of the stop 510. In the open position, a small slot (not shown) is formed between the second arm

515 and the surface 513 of the stop 510 so that the post 12 of the stud 10 can pass through the small slot into the loop portion 512.

Fig. 7A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 500 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 512, and rests on the hanger portion 512A of the loop portion 510 in the closed position. The stop 510 prevents the post 12 from passing between the arms 514, 515 of the jewelry apparatus 500. As shown in Fig. 7A, in application, the arm portions 514, 515 forming the loop portion 512 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (now shown), the loop portion 512 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the naval area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 500 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer partly rotates the second arm 515 of the loop portion 512 to the open position forming the small slot (not shown) so that the post 12 of the stud 10 passes through the small slot and into the loop portion 512. The second arm portion 515 releases from the stop 510 by threadably releasing the threaded portion of the second arm portion 515 from the threaded bore of the surface 513 of the stop 510. Once the post 12 is disposed within the loop portion 512, the post 12 is retained therein by rotating the loop portion 512 to the closed position as shown in the drawings. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 500 is similarly performed by rotating the second arm portion 515 to the open position as described, and removing the post 12 from the loop portion 512 of the jewelry apparatus 500.

Not shown in Figs. 7 or 7A, a decorative element 22 is preferably attached to the jewelry apparatus 500 so that the decorative element 22 depends from the jewelry apparatus 500. The decorative element 22 can attach to the loop portion 512 by means known in the art.

Figs. 8 and 8A illustrate an alternate attachment of jewelry apparatus 600 than shown in the previous drawings.

Fig. 9 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry apparatus 700. The jewelry apparatus 700 includes a wire loop portion 712 having a hanger portion 712A and a stop member 710. The loop portion 712 formed of a first arm portion 714 and a second arm portion 715. In this configuration the loop portion 712 having an inverted U shape, with the first arm portion 714 affixed to a surface 713 of the stop 710 and, the second arm portion 715 frictionally attaching to a bore (not shown) disposed in the surface 713 of the stop 710. Loop portion 712 having an open position (not shown) where second arm portion 715 is not received within the bore of the surface 713 of the stop 710, and a closed position as shown in Figs. 9 and 9A where the second arm portion 715 is received within the bore of the stop 710.

Fig. 9A illustrates the jewelry apparatus 700 attached to the standard barbell stud 10. In particular, the post 12 is disposed through the loop portion 712, and rests on the hanger portion 712A of the loop portion 710 in the closed position. As shown in Fig. 9A, in application, the arm portions 714, 715 forming the loop portion 712 can rest on the lower ball retainer 14, or in the alternative (not shown), the loop portion 712 can be disposed between the upper ball retainer 13 and the nasal area 19.

To attach the jewelry apparatus 700 with the barbell stud 10, the wearer separates the second arm portion 715 from the bore of the stop 710 to the open position that forms an opening (not shown) so that the post 12 of the stud 10 can pass through the opening into the loop portion 712. Once the post 12 is disposed within the loop portion 712, the post 12 is retained therein by re-inserting the second arm portion 712 into the bore of the stop 710 to the closed position as shown in the drawings. Removal of the jewelry apparatus 700 is similarly accomplished by separating the second arm portion 715 from the bore of the stop 710 to the open position and removing the post 12 from the loop portion 712 of the jewelry apparatus 700.

Although the description above contains many specificities, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but as merely providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention. As such, it is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the claims.

Thus the scope of the invention should be determined by the claims in the formal application and their legal equivalents, rather than by the examples given.